

The Classical Outlook

Continuing Latin Notes

Published monthly, October to May, inclusive, by the American Classical League

New York University, Washington Square East, New York City

Price of subscription, \$1 per year. The annual fee of \$1 for membership in the American Classical League includes subscription to THE CLASSICAL OUTLOOK.

Entered as second class matter Oct. 7, 1936, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

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VOL. XV

OCTOBER, 1937

No. 1

CAESAR AUGUSTUS

BY KENNETH SCOTT

Western Reserve University

On the twenty-third of September, B.C. 63, the Roman Senate had before it the conspiracy of Catiline. One distinguished member named Octavius arrived late. He had been detained at his home near the Ox-Heads in the Palatine quarter by the birth of a son and heir Gaius.

The early childhood of the lad was spent in Rome and at the country estate of his grandfather in the town of Velitrae. Legend has cast a veil of mystery and magic over this child of destiny. One night his nurse left him in his cradle on the ground floor; the next morning the babe had disappeared, and after a diligent search he was discovered lying on a lofty tower with his face towards the rising sun. Again, when he first began to speak, he was disturbed by the noise of the frogs on his grandfather's farm. He bade them be silent and, as the story goes, no frog has ever croaked there since that day.

Omens portended the future greatness of the child, and even Cicero is said to have been warned in a dream that the gods had sent a master to rule the Romans. The orator, on one occasion, when he was accompanying Julius Caesar to the Capitol, related to his friends a strange dream he had had the night before. It seemed to him that a youth of noble appearance was lowered from Heaven on a golden chain, and, standing before the door of the temple, was presented with a whip by Jupiter. No sooner had Cicero told of this nocturnal vision than he caught sight of the young Octavius and declared that the youth was the very person of his dream.

Octavius caught the fancy of his uncle, the dictator, who was impressed by the pluck and endurance of the sickly boy who defied illness, dangerous enemies, and shipwreck to join him in Spain in 46. Two years later Caesar was struck down by the daggers of the liberators, and it was found that in his will he had adopted the schoolboy then studying at Apollonia and made him heir to his name and vast fortune.

Thus at the age of nineteen this "boy," as his enemies contemptuously called him, was precipitated into the political arena. Against the advice of his mother and step-father he sailed for Italy and claimed his inheritance, only to be blocked at every turn by Marcus Antonius. Antony's hostility drove the young Octavian into the arms of the senatorial party. He raised an army of veterans, offered his services through Cicero and plunged into the Civil War. Thanks to the young Caesar, Antony was put to flight, but the Senate committed the fatal mistake of scorning its youthful savior. Cicero proposed that the "boy" be decorated, praised, and "kicked upstairs" (*Laudandum adolescentem, ornandum, tollendum*. Cic. *Ad Fam.* XI, 20, 1. When Octavian got the news he signified that he had no intention of permitting any such thing, and his troops forced a cowed populace into electing him

consul. He joined with his former foe Antonius and with Lepidus in a triumvirate for restoring the state. The three dictators "liquidated" their political foes, among them Cicero, whose head was lopped off by a centurion, insulted by Fulvia and her husband Antony, and impaled upon the rostrum. On the battlefield of Philippi the sickly youth and his middle-aged soldier colleague Antony crushed the forces of Brutus and Cassius. The moribund Republic was ended, though perhaps few knew this; and the three victors divided the empire.

To Octavian's lot fell the thankless task of satisfying the discharged soldiers with lands in Italy. He accomplished this and waged successful warfare, first against Lucius Antonius, brother of the triumvir, and then against the uncouth Sextus Pompey, who for a time controlled the high seas and ravaged the coasts of Italy. After Sextus' overthrow, Lepidus attempted to seize control in the West, but Octavian stripped him of his power and banished him to Circei for life.

One more act in the drama of the civil wars was yet to be played. The break between Octavian in the West and Antony in the East came soon, and in 31 B.C. at Actium the fleets of Antony and Cleopatra were put to flight. Their end by suicide in Egypt left Octavian undisputed master of the Roman world.

The victor had a problem before him. Should he, like Sulla, restore the Republic and retire to private life, or should he devise some new scheme of government for the Roman world? By January 1, 27 B.C., Octavian had made his choice. He was surnamed Augustus, clothed with the tribunician power and the *imperium*, and by his prestige (*auctoritas*) he swayed the destiny of the Senate and the Roman people.

Some may see in Augustus, as we may now call him, a ruthless schemer, thirsty for power, the foe of liberty and republican government, the creator of the Roman Empire. But may it not be that such critics, ancient and modern, overlook the faults of the Republic and see the Rome of Cicero through rose-colored glasses? When Jugurtha left Rome he called it a city for sale if it could find a purchaser. The state had not improved by the time of Caesar, Pompey, and Cicero. Elections were bought. Even the virtuous Cato felt constrained to contribute to the campaign fund for buying votes. The sovereign people consisted no longer of farmer-citizen-soldiers, but of an idle, pampered, lawless mob. Rome had become the melting pot of the ancient world; the Tigris and Euphrates flowed into the Tiber.

Governors plundered the defenceless provincials and bought their acquittal in the courts at home. Senators quarrelled with knights and both with the masses. Class hatred and strife, luxury, vice, lawlessness, the dole had rotted the moral fibre of the people and the state. The world cried for peace (*Da nobis pacem!*), the unending cry of humanity. Rome had had enough of civil war.

Augustus undertook no light burden; he can have had no illusions after more than a decade of experience during the

triumvirate and the contest with Antony. As Tiberius later remarked, "The rule of the Roman people was like holding a wolf by the ears."

The *princeps*, Augustus, gave the people, and especially the Senate, all the power they could or would employ to good purpose. But more and more the burden fell upon the sovereign. He gave Rome and the provinces justice, the Augustan peace, prosperity, bread and shows; and the majority of mankind was satisfied and blessed his name. He made Rome imposing beyond belief. He well remarked that he found the city built of brick and left it of marble.

Sorrow came, as well as success, upon the uncrowned monarch. Death struck down those nearest and dearest to him, his sister's child Marcellus, his friend and son-in-law Agrippa, his beloved grandsons and adopted sons, Gaius and Lucius, Drusus, his step-son. And worse than all perhaps, was the public disgrace of his wayward daughter, Julia, and her daughter of the same name. Indeed these two and his savage grandson Agrippa Postumus he called his three boils and ulcers. One can but pity him and wonder at the works of Nemesis.

The young Octavian was duplicity itself, cold, unswerving, vengeful, but he was the product of circumstance, of the time, and of his heritage. Yet there is something admirable in the older Augustus, generous to the deserving, merciful, at least for his time, witty, fond of dicing, temperate of food and drink, clad in homespun made by the women of the imperial family, indefatigable in public business.

Augustus once prayed that he might secure the safety of the State and be called the author of the best government, and that dying he might carry with him the hope that his foundations for the State might endure unshaken. When, at the age of seventy-six, his end approached, the revered emperor could safely confide in that hope. His public labors were crowned with success. The sickly youth, wracked in later years with rheumatism, abscesses of the liver, bladder trouble, catarrh, and a multitude of other complaints, had lived long enough to give to Rome a new lease on life. In the next centuries Christianity, born in the era of the Augustan peace, was to grow strong and carry civilization through the dark ages to come. Augustus could not realize all this, but he knew he had served his people faithfully and well. On his last day of life he called in his friends and asked them whether he seemed to have played well the comedy of life. Then, kissing his wife, he uttered the words, "Live mindful of our wedlock, Livia, and farewell," and swiftly and painlessly passed away. By the Senate he was decreed immortality, but his rôle in history had won for him an immortality more abiding than any the Roman conscript fathers could decree.

CAESAR AUGUSTUS

BY FRANCES REUBELT

Tulsa, Oklahoma

On blood, proscriptions long his youth had fed.
With ruthlessness had bartered friend and foe.
To hate and vengeance yielding Cicero,
Had gazed unmoved upon that severed head.

Then Rome was his alone, with all its dead.
Augustus now, peace, friendship would he show
To all mankind. A new Rome would bestow
In marble grandeur where her sons had bled.

Was his a soul reborn? What sign had turned
Him to those ways wherein so well he wrought?
Whence had he justice, mercy, pity learned,

The state anew to plan, with blessings fraught
For races near and far? Wise, great his rule,
Because with poets he had been to school?

OCTAVIAN COMES HOME

BY ALLEN E. WOODALL

*Northern State Teachers College,
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Before them were the lights of the port of Rome. There were torches moving along the shore near the dock. Octavian shivered under his military cloak. For the first time he realized how tired he was. Far behind in the growing dusk he could see the black shadows of the fleet—Agrippa's fleet that had so recently conquered Sextus Pompey in the red terror of that long battle. He could still hardly realize that it was all over, that all those black-bearded savage pirates were dead. He felt that even now, in his dreams, he would see them swarming up over the poop of the ship, shrieking and slashing with their long knives. Octavian shut his eyes and shuddered. When he opened them again he saw the port coming nearer; the ship had swung in the current or the pilot was heading it in. The light swam toward them; answering lights blossomed out on the high galleys; some of the soldiers were shouting. To be sure there were girls on the wharf; there would be wine, a bath, quiet, peace. It was really dark now; night had crept toward them from the land, turning the deep waters black and the sky to cobalt. It would be too late to go up to the city to-night. He would not see Livia until morning.

But the wharf was coming nearer as though it were a ferry, and the water under it danced in the light of the torches. There was a litter waiting, and women about. Then he saw her—it could be no one else; there was not such a head of red-gold hair in the world. Livia was waiting for him.

It was a different Octavian that stepped from the small boat, answering the cheers of the people. There was almost a spring in his step, and his weariness was shaken off in the darkness of the bay. Yes, Livia was there, and beside her Maecenas, dear Maecenas, and beside him the broadly smiling, huge, armored figure of Agrippa, Agrippa the conqueror. But Octavian saw only Livia.

But they weren't smiling. What was the matter? Here was victory complete. Sextus Pompey's army of pirates lay deep in the blue waters north of Sicily, and Pompey himself was off in flight somewhere. Slowly the weight of words broke in upon him among the bewildering torchlight. Lepidus . . . Lepidus . . . Lepidus . . . but whoever thought of Lepidus? . . . He was in Africa, wasn't he? But he wasn't . . . that was the point. Lepidus was in Sicily with a great army, nearly all of Caesar's old legions. He had probably watched the sea battle from one of the promontories, waiting there until one of his rivals should be crushed, and the other limp into port. Lepidus would be emperor, dictator of Rome in spite of the Senate, of Octavian. Octavian remembered the face of Lepidus, long ago in the Forum, when the three of them walked together, and Anthony had stormed ahead to gather the plaudits of the crowd, thrusting his hand high up in a grand salute as only he could do it. Lepidus had set his hand on Octavian's shoulder. "We two will rule," he had said in his smooth, grey, banker's voice, "when Anthony is far away acting the king, and forgets Rome." Octavian had not believed him at the time, but there was nothing he could do about it. Lepidus could not speak in public, but he was a master of men in his own way. . . .

So it wasn't over at all—hardly beginning, in fact. The pirates weren't the real enemy. It was Lepidus waiting in Sicily, with his uncle's, with Caesar's legions. Octavian was very tired again, all at once. "Come," he said, "let's try to get some sleep tonight. The men are worn out, and need a rest." They went to their little villa on the Tiber.

Sometime in the night Octavian had a strange dream. It seemed as though the curtains of the cubiculum parted and the lean, deeply-lined, sardonic face of Julius Caesar looked in.

He called to Octavian, and out in the midnight shadows of the peristyle they talked a while. It wasn't until after he awoke that he realized that Caesar wasn't there and never would be again—that *he* was Caesar. Now Octavian lay awake on the bed waiting for his breakfast and trying to remember what Caesar had said to him. Livia was doing up her hair, hastily. Her maid would be in later. She looked a question at Octavian.

"Go on," he said. "Ask it. What shall I do?"

"Well, now you mention it—"

"Livia," he said, "Those are *my* legions—those soldiers of Lepidus."

"Some old philosopher has said that possession is nine-tenths of the law. How are you going to get them?"

Octavian didn't like platitudes, but Livia was full of them. He was glad to see breakfast come in. After that they didn't say much. Livia asked no more questions until they had brought in Caesar's old army cloak, and Octavian had tried it on.

"Are you going to Sicily?" she asked. Octavian nodded.

"Hand me a mirror." Livia reached out a round Persian bauble. Inside its gaudy rim Octavian saw the fair head of a very serious boy comically surmounting the worn red army cloak of Julius Caesar. But it was strangely like Caesar, after all—if Caesar had ever looked that young.

"Aren't you going to wear armor?" Livia looked worried.

"It isn't going to be that kind of a fight."

"At least a sword." Octavian agreed, but when he brought it out Livia balked again: "That old Greek relic!"

"It isn't much, but Caesar's men will know it; he wore it constantly."

And he took only one ship, a small swift Liburnian with one bank of oars. They set out quietly from the port with only Livia and her retinue waving farewell from the dock. Livia didn't cry at times like that. She just grew very quiet, looking more and more like the statue of Aphrodite that Octavian had seen once in some obscure little Greek temple.

The Liburnian was fast. They made little attempt to use the sails, for the sky was a little overcast and hazy, and there was not a breath of wind. After a while even the sea gulls stopped following and watching the boat with their bright little eyes. The land was a hazy line far to the left, and there was no sound but the steady plunging beat of the little drum and the groaning antiphonal answer of the oars as they rose, and swung, and lashed the quiet water again and again. Octavian leaned on the rail and listened. The ship was creaking, and, down below, the thews and muscles of strong men creaked. The path of empire. . . .

When they located the camp of Lepidus it was nearly dark again. There was no mistaking the thick curl of smoke over beyond the promontory just turning black with the sun behind it. Octavian called for a Greek centurion who had spent his life in Sicily—what life he had known before the Roman armies called him. For a long while they talked together in a strange mixture of Latin and Greek with now and then odd Phoenician fragments, and something older than Phoenician. The centurion went away smiling, and Octavian looked out toward Sicily. They drew into a shallow cove with a smooth beach. Over beyond the hill was a red flare. "Tomorrow," said Octavian. . . . "Tomorrow. . . ."

There were no dreams that night. Possibly Caesar was well content. In the morning there were gulls about them again, screeching and circling. It should be some sort of omen, Octavian thought as he stepped out on the sand; but who knows the ways of sea gulls, much less the ways of the gods? The centurion led the way, and seven of them followed on stocky, sure-footed little horses—all but Octavian. He rode a tall white horse, such a one as Caesar had loved. He wondered if he could speak from it as Caesar had done.

The slope ran up sharply at first, then levelled off to a barren upland. For a while they could see the ocean and the

ship, infinitely small, riding at anchor. There were no houses anywhere.

They met the first soldier on the downward slope. He was gathering firewood; he said nothing, and stared after them. Then they saw the camp sprawled out below. Octavian almost smiled. Caesar would never have kept such a camp. His men must know it. There was no fosse, and hardly a barricade. The two guards at the entrance were lolling in the shade of some bushes, but sprang up at their approach. Octavian saluted gravely. The guards whispered a moment, then saluted in return with an "Ave, Caesar!" The little party rode into camp.

* * * * *

Lepidus was well pleased with himself and the world. In fact he was sound asleep, dreaming he was back in Rome, perhaps. Ordinarily he drank in moderation, but last night had called for a celebration. Sextus Pompey was swept from the seas forever, Octavian was in the port of Rome mending his broken ships, and he, Lepidus, stood like a watch-dog solidly on the doormat of Sicily with all the legions that the young Caesar should have had. Lepidus loved to have others pull his chestnuts out of the fire. But as he dreamed, something seemed to bother him, as though a huge bird were flapping about his head. He pried one eye open, then another. The tent flap was blowing open, letting in a long beam of sunlight. He called for his aide, but no one answered. He sat up. There was a strange silence about, but in the distance he could hear voices—no, chiefly one voice. Lepidus pulled on a cloak and went out.

The commotion came from the far end of the camp. Lepidus had no trouble finding it. Everyone was going there, and no one noticed the smallish old man in a tight cloak and tousled hair. In the center of a ring of soldiers he saw a tall figure in a red cloak sitting on a big white horse. For a hair-raising moment he thought it was Caesar himself—the same gestures, the same tone of voice. . . . Then he knew it was Octavian, and the men were listening. Lepidus tried to shout, tried to scream out. He opened his mouth, but no voice came. The men—Caesar's men—would pay no attention to him. He stepped back quietly, fearfully, and sought his tent.

* * * * *

It was broad daylight when the Liburnian came back into the port of Rome. The oars moved slowly, quietly. The harbor was still in the yellow sunlight, as though sleeping. No girls thronged the wharves, no sailors shouted. Octavian stood alone on the prow. Strange, he thought, so many to greet the half-triumph, and none the fulfillment! But there was a litter waiting at the dock, and a red-gold head peeping from the curtains. She must have stationed someone to watch. Octavian nearly ran from the boat into the arms of Livia and Maecenas.

Octavian laughed, boyishly. "We must receive a guest, Livia."

"A guest? Who?"

"Lepidus. Didn't you know Lepidus was retiring?"

Maecenas nodded. "I guessed as much."

BOOK NOTES

Caesaris Augusti Res Gestae et Fragmenta. By Robert S. Rogers, Kenneth Scott, and Margaret M. Ward. 119 pages. D. C. Heath & Co. \$1.00.

This book, a supplementary reading text for Latin classes from the second year to college, contains the *Res Gestae* of Augustus, and also a large number of letters, jests, and other fragments written by the first emperor. The editors comment on the clarity of Augustus's style and upon his significance as a high school author. The book is well illustrated and annotated, and contains a vocabulary. It forms a fitting tribute to Augustus on the occasion of his Bimillennium.

—L. B. L.

THE DETROIT MEETING

By W. L. CARR

Teachers College, Columbia University

Following a long established policy the American Classical League held its annual meeting in connection with the summer meeting of the National Education Association. The unusually attractive program was prepared by Dr. Anna P. MacVay, First Vice President of the League and Chairman of the Committee on Cooperation with the N.E.A. The local arrangements for the meeting were carried out by an efficient committee under the chairmanship of Miss Dorothy M. Roehm, of the Thomas M. Cooley High School.

The first session was held on Monday afternoon, June 28, in cooperation with the Department of Secondary Education. The general topic was "Extra-Curricular Activities in Ancient Languages" and the leaders of the discussion were Miss Helen L. Dean, Lewis and Clarke High School, Spokane, Mrs. Pauline E. Burton, Libbey High School, Toledo, and Miss Dorothy Park Latta, New York.

The program of papers presented at the second session on Tuesday afternoon, June 29, was as follows: Message from the Honorary President, Andrew F. West, Dean Emeritus, Princeton University; "As Others See Us," Wilbert L. Carr, Teachers College, Columbia University; "Exploratory Languages Courses," Helen Leech, South Orange High School, New Jersey; "How Can Latin Teaching Develop Desirable Personalities?," Fred S. Dunham, University of Michigan; "The Classics in an Adult Education Program," Helen Wied and Cole, Conference Leader and Lecturer, Rollins College; "Latin and an Integrated Curriculum," Lillian Gay Berry, Indiana University; "Old Latin in New Bottles," Charles E. Little, George Peabody College for Teachers.

At the third session on Wednesday afternoon, June 30, the following papers were presented: "American Classical League in Action," Dorothy Park Latta, Director, A.C.L. Service Bureau; "The Two Thousandth Anniversary of Augustus," Norman W. Dewitt, Victoria College, Toronto University; "The Problem of Enrollment in Latin," Orville C. Pratt, President, N.E.A., Superintendent of Schools, Spokane; "Streamlined Latin," B. L. Ullman, University of Chicago; "The Mind of William H. McGuffey," W. J. Cameron, Ford Motor Company, Dearborn.

An especially attractive feature of the program on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon was the superb singing of the A Capella Choir of Northwestern High School, Detroit, under the leadership of Miss Alice M. Lowden.

A special feature of the subscription dinner on Tuesday evening was the finished performance of the Verse Speaking Choir of the Thomas M. Cooley High School under the direction of Miss Marion L. Miller.

At the business session of the Council held Wednesday forenoon, the following officers were elected: President, B. L. Ullman, University of Chicago; Vice Presidents, Anna P. MacVay, Wadleigh High School, New York; Charles C. Mierow, Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota; Charles E. Little, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville; Richard M. Gunmere, Harvard University; Secretary-Treasurer, Rollin H. Tanner, New York University, Washington Square East, New York; Director of League Service and Publications, Dorothy Park Latta, New York University, Washington Square East, New York; Editor of *THE CLASSICAL OUTLOOK*, Lillian B. Lawler, Hunter College, New York; Members of the Executive Committee (to serve for two years), George D. Hadzsits, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, and Wilbert L. Carr, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York; Elective Member of the Council (to serve for six years), Russell M. Geer, Tulane University, New Orleans, La.; Elective Member of the Finance Committee, Edna White, William L. Dickinson High School, Jersey City, N. J.

The election of Professor Ullman to the presidency is eminently fitting. An outstanding classical scholar, he has always maintained an intelligent and sympathetic interest in the work of the schools. He is centrally located geographically and has for years been an active member of the council. Furthermore, Professor Ullman was a prime mover for and host at the Classical Conference held at the University of Pittsburgh in 1918 in connection with the summer meeting of the N.E.A., at which meeting a constitution was drawn up for the establishment of the American Classical League.

The return of Professor Tanner to the Secretary-Treasurer-ship will give the League the benefit of his long and devoted experience as an officer and will preserve the desirable official connection of the League with New York University.

The other members of the Council, new and old, have proved their devotion to the cause of the classics and the present writer predicts for the League a most successful future.

HAVE YOU TRIED THIS?

Celebrating the Augustan Bimillennium

During the school year of 1937-38, Latin classes and classical clubs might be interested in paying some honor to the memory of the first Roman emperor, Augustus, on the occasion of his two-thousandth anniversary. Numerous ways of celebrating the Augustan Bimillennium will probably occur to all Latin teachers. Some will prefer a classical club program, with talks on the life and achievements of Augustus. Some will invite lecturers to give illustrated talks on the buildings of the Augustan period, and recent excavations in Rome. Some will put on a play centering about Augustus. Some will spread the celebration over the entire school year, and do much reading in the literature of the Augustan Age, or in the writings of the emperor himself. Every classical club might do well to read at least one piece of ancient literature bearing upon Augustus. For this purpose either the *Res Gestae* of Augustus himself, or Suetonius's life of Augustus, even if it must be read wholly or in part in translation, will be especially interesting. The following material, which may be obtained through the American Classical League, will be found helpful—L. B. L.

AMERICAN CLASSICAL LEAGUE SERVICE BUREAU

DOROTHY PARK LATTA, *Director*

The American Classical League Service Bureau has for sale the following material. Numbering is continued from the May issue. Complete catalogue available. 20 cents postpaid. Please order by number.

553. A selected bibliography on Augustus. By W. L. Carr and F. R. Sisson. 10c.

554. *Lepidus celebrates*. By Allen E. Woodall. 10c. 4 male characters. Time: 10 minutes.

This Vergilian play could be used for the Augustan Bimillennium—Supplement 47. *VERGIL, THE PROPHET OF PEACE*. By Esther Friedlander and Rose M. Mickley. 10c. 3 scenes. 19 characters (15 male, 4 female), chorus of 7 maidens, 1 male attendant. A pageant in three scenes; a shepherds' contest in song and flute; the giving of prizes to runners by Augustus; and a play, "Dido and Aeneas," on a festal day; the prophecy of peace by the Sibyl; epilogue. Time: 20 minutes. Fourth year, or college.

The following two new plays written especially for the Augustan Bimillennium may be obtained from Allen E. Woodall, Northern State Teachers College, Aberdeen, South Dakota.

IN CAESAR'S GARDEN. By Allen E. Woodall. 25c. 1 scene. 3 characters; 2 male, 1 female. Caesar Augustus and Livia chat in the garden until Horace arrives. Time: 10-15 minutes. Fourth year or college.

CAESAR'S REPUBLIC. By Allen E. Woodall. 60c. 6 scenes. 16 characters; 2 female, 14 male. The story of Augustus from the death of Caesar to the end of Augustus' career. Can be acted or read equally well. Time: full length play. Fourth year or college.

The following material previously published is also available from the League Service Bureau. Please order by number.

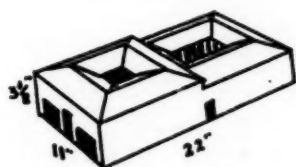
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NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attention is directed to the April number of EDUCATION, which is devoted to the teaching of the Classics. Under the editorship of Prof. B. L. Ullman, the issue contains articles by outstanding teachers of Latin and Greek. Copies may be obtained for 50c each from the Palmer Co., 120 Boylston St., Boston, Mass.

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